



SLEEP PATTERNS INFLUENCE YOUR FOOD INTAKE

Sleep does much more than recharge your body. It has large impacts on your metabolism, feelings of hunger and fullness, and the types of foods we crave. It is common that we hear about the foods that can affect our sleep quality, but our sleep can also affect what and how we eat.

SLEEP AND HORMONE CONNECTION

Proper sleep can play a key role in regulating your hormones that work to control your appetite. The two main appetite hormones are ghrelin and leptin.

Ghrelin is the "hunger hormone" which signals you to start eating, while leptin is the 'satiety' hormone that tells you when you're full and to stop eating. When you do not get enough sleep it can cause an imbalance within these hormones. Ghrelin levels will increase while leptin levels decrease. This is associated with an increase in appetite alongside a decrease in energy levels due to the lack of sleep, which can promote over consumption of food with a lack of movement. With consistent improper sleep patterns, weight gain is commonly shown.



Cortisol, also known as the "stress hormone", is another hormone that can be affected by our sleep quality. With poor sleep quality, cortisol levels can rise making us feel anxious and stressed out. This then can lead to emotional eating and cravings for high-fat and sugary foods.

The hormone insulin can also be directly impacted by sleep. Poor sleep quality can decrease insulin sensitivity, which means that your body will become less efficient in processing glucose. When this happens you are increasing your risk for weight gain and the development of type 2 diabetes.





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FOOD CHOICES AFTER POOR SLEEP

Lack of sleep can make you hungrier and impacts the foods that we crave. People who sleep less tend to prefer meals and foods that are higher in calories, fat, and sugar. These people also tend to eat late at night, snack more, and consume larger portions. This might be because the lack of sleep can lead to poor decision making and impulse control.

LONG TERM CONSEQUENCES OF SLEEP-DEPRIVED EATING:

- Weight gain
- Increased risk for type 2 diabetes
- Raised cholesterol and blood pressure
- Digestive issues

TIPS FOR ALIGNING SLEEP AND EATING HABITS:

- Try to get 7-9 hours of sleep each nights
- Maintain a consistent sleep schedule even on the weekends
- Eat regular meals during the day
- Avoid sugar and caffeine 2-3 hours before bed
- Exercise can promote better sleep
- Herbal teas like chamomile for relaxation

